The Livingston County Historical Society

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Fairbury, Illinois

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Livingston County Historical Society

•The impetus to start the Society was a speech given at a meeting of the Kiwanis Club of Pontiac in November 1924.

•This speech was a paper on Native American life, habits, and history of this region presented by Kiwanian Henry Mies. Mr. Mies was a collector and student of Native American relics and lore.

-In his speech, Mr. Mies pleaded for a means of preserving Native American artifacts for future generations to enjoy.

•The members of Kiwanis were so impressed with the paper that it resulted in the formation of a Livingston County Historical Society.

Livingston County Historical Society

- The Society was established 12/11/1924

- The first officers of the Society were elected in 1925.

- In 1936, the Society erected the stone monument to Chief Pontiac that sets on the southeast corner of the grounds of the old Livingston County Courthouse.

- After the 100 year Centennial celebration of Livingston County in 1937, the Society went dormant after 12 years of existence.

- In 1963, after being dormant for 26 years, the Society was revived by Mr. Tuesburg and Mr. Yost. The Society has remained active through 2019, or a span of 56 years.

Livingston County Historical Society

•In December of 2015, the Society had the weather damaged Chief Pontiac memorial repaired.

Mother Nature took her toll after 79 years of weathering !!

Society has ~ 68 members

Livingston County Historical Society

- Over the years, three Pontiac homes have been placed under the care of the Society.

- Yost House (Just northwest of Mill Street Dam)

- Jones House (Just east of Evenglow high-rise)

- Strevell House (1 block north of US 116, 3 blocks east of Pontiac Fire Department)

Livingston County Historical Society

- Yost House
  - -Mother & father built house
  - -Had 2 girls & 1 boy
  - -No child married
  - -Last to die left house to City of Pontiac
  - -Society manages
  - -2 Generations of Household possessions

Livingston County Historical Society

- Jones House
  - -Oldest Brick House in Pontiac
  - -”Story and a ½”
  - -Period furniture
  - -Neat small house

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- Strevell House
  - -Abe Lincoln spent evening in house
  - -6” 4’ Height Marked in Doorway
  - -Opened in 2018
  - -Enbridge Pipeline donated $$ and work crews
  - -Own “Keystone Pipeline”

All 3 Houses Open Monthly for Free Public Tours

Livingston County Historical Society

- Jones House Repairs

Livingston County Historical Society

- **Jones House Repairs**

- Pulls fell apart over time
- Docent kept parts in shoebox
- Re-assembled, missing 1 wood pull ☹

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- **Jones House Repairs**

Neat trick.
Substitute oak for ebony.

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- **Jones House Repairs**

Which drawer pull is the new one? ☺

Livingston County Historical Society

- Jones House Repairs

Livingston County Historical Society

- Jones House Repairs

3 Pick-Up loads of debris to Fairbury City dump area !

Livingston County Historical Society

- **Jones House Repairs**

Grandson Caleb Learning How to Be a Mason ☺

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How to lift 180 Pound white Capstones ??

Livingston County Historical Society

Going up the ramp

Winch

Bar clamp to attach
Winch to

Ice-Tong Concept

Moving stone into place

1st stone in place

All 4 stones raised to top of wall

Repairs Done – Inside of Wall

Repairs Done – Outside of Wall

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- **Strevell House Repairs**

"Dale: Some paint is starting to peel on the front of the house"

Built in 1860

161 Years Old !

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- Strevell House Repairs

-sit on ground & paint
-stand and paint
-stepladder
-extension ladder
-Rent man-lift

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- Strevell House Repairs

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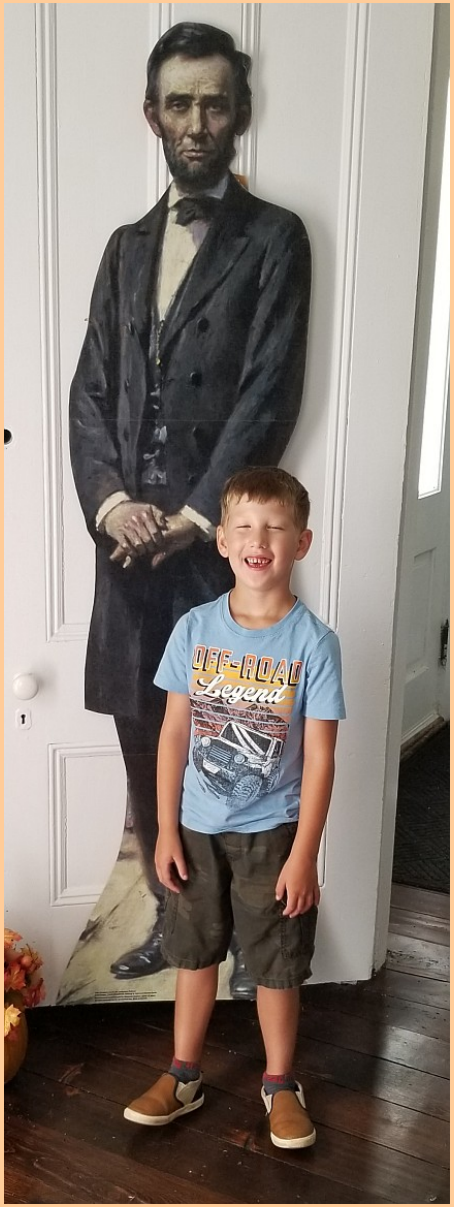

- Strevell House Repairs

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Front all painted ☺

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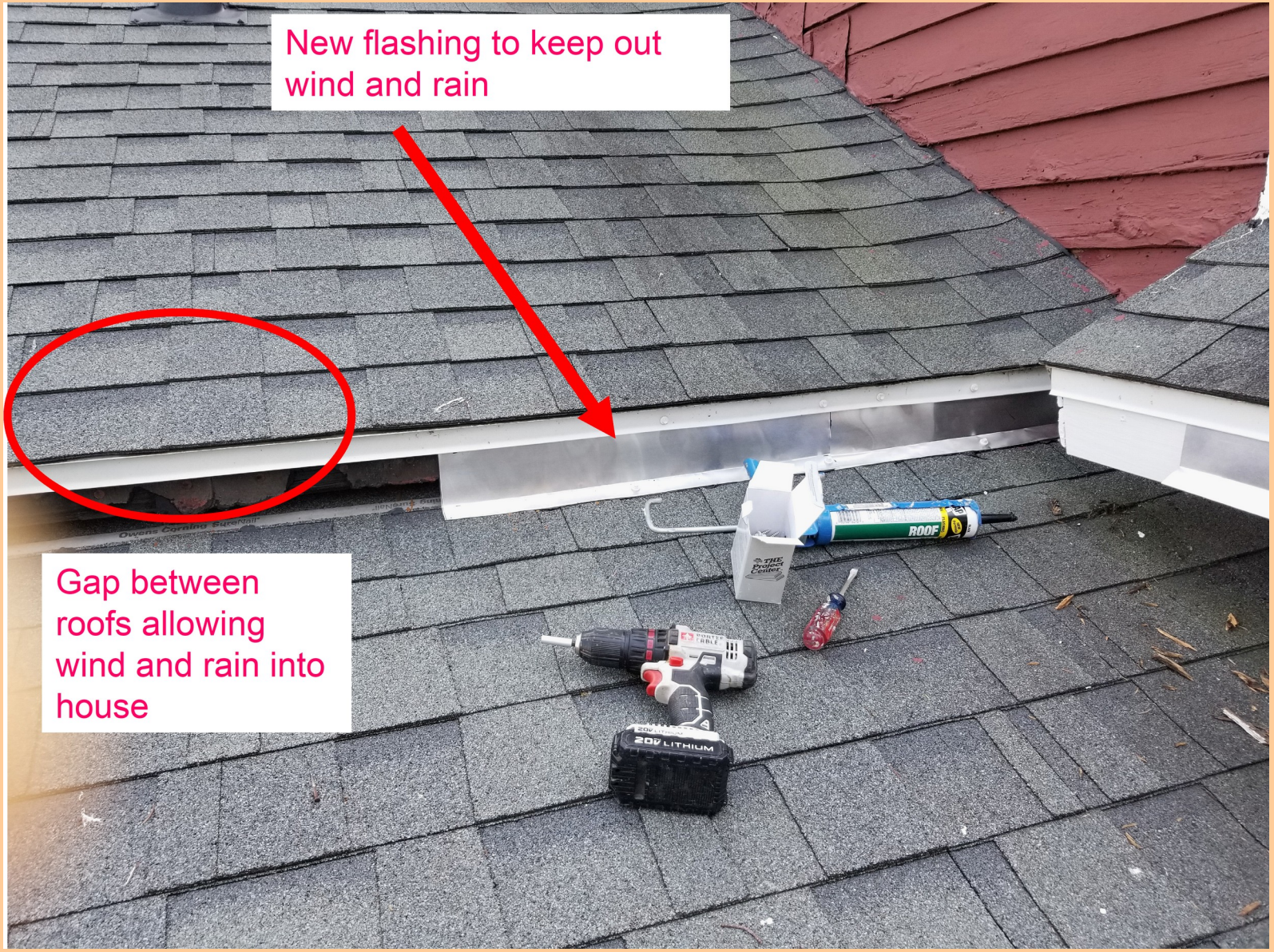
North side steps

Livingston County Historical Society



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- Strevell House

- No photos of 1850 American bookcases available

- Owned 1 book = Bible

- English 1850 bookcase
  - -hardwood frame
  - -pine floating panels for back

Livingston County Historical Society

2021	1850
Electric saw, drill	Ok, had hand saws & drills
Electric planer	Ok, had hand planes
Electric router for edges	Ok, had hand planes
Modern nails	Only “cut nails”
Screws	Ok, had screws
Dowels	Ok, they had them
Steel table top fasteners	They used wood version
Plywood back	No plywood, use cabinet door “floating panels”
Oil stain	Ok, they had stains
Polyurethane	They only had Shellac
Hide glue & glue pot	Used Titebond II**

**Only item not “Period Correct”

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Cut Nails

$15 per small box

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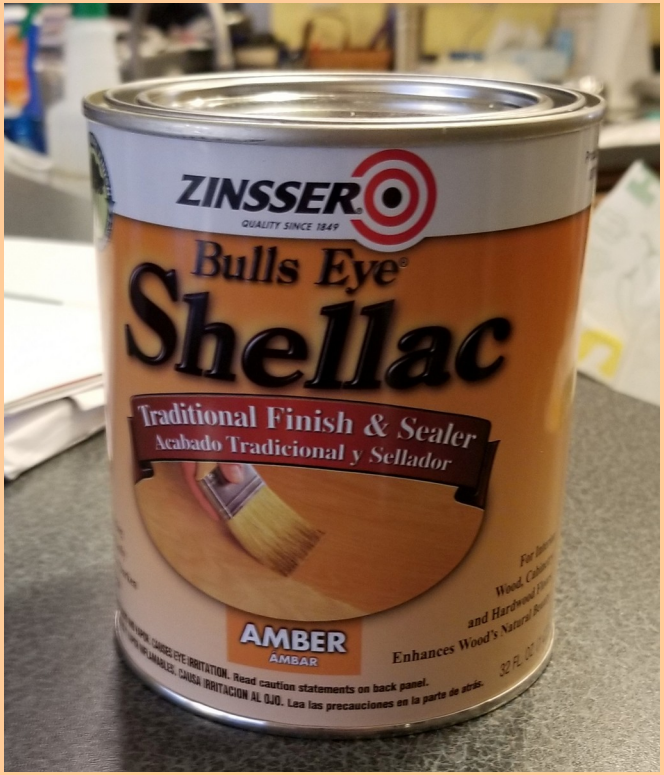

Livingston County Historical Society

1850 English pattern

Dale C. Maley version

Summary

- 68 Members
- Meet 8 times per year
- Guest speaker talking about Livingston County History
  + Snacks ☺
- Can attend for free to check it out
- Annual Dues
  - $15 Single
  - $25 Family
  - $200 Lifetime

Questions?